

[17]

MEMORIAL

OF

SUNDRY CITIZENS OF CHARLESTON, S. C.

AGAINST

THE TARIFF.

DECEMBER 7, 1820,

Referred to the Committee on Manufactures.

WASHINGTON:

PRINTED BY GALES & SEATON.

1820.

MEMORIAL.

TO THE HONORABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THE citizens of Charleston have seen, with deep regret, the efforts which were made, at the last session of Congress, to impose a high rate of duties on all manufactured articles imported into the United States; efforts made for the express and avowed purpose of creating, encouraging, and supporting, in this country, great manufacturing establishments; of modifying and curtailing extensively our mercantile intercourse with foreign nations; and of forcing from their present employments much of the labor and capital of our fellow-citizens. As there is much cause to apprehend that this measure will again be presented to the consideration of Congress, your memorialists beg leave to state the reasons which have led them to view this system as one unfavorable to the general interests of the United States; as one likely to prove partial in its operations, injurious in its effects, uncertain in its results; as one which departs equally from the spirit of our constitution and the best established principles of national economy.

It is a position, almost too self-evident for controversy, that, in every free or well regulated government, labor and capital should be permitted to seek and to find their own employment. To the sagacity of individuals, this trust may be safely committed. A government can never regulate to advantage the employment of capital, because success in the pursuit of wealth, in every department of life, depends on local circumstances, on minute details, on personal exertions, which cannot be regulated; on causes that escape those general views which alone a government can take of the transactions of its citizens. It is sufficient that a government takes care that the employment of each individual shall inflict on others, or on the community at large, no injury; and that each shall receive equal and uniform protection: all interference beyond this is useless or pernicious. It is equally obvious, that those employments of capital which are most profitable to the individual, must, on a general scale, prove the most advantageous to the state. National is but the aggregate of individual wealth; whenever, therefore, capital is diverted from one employment, in which it makes a certain profit, to another, in which a smaller profit only can be obtained, the difference between these employments of capital is, exactly to the extent of that difference, an actual loss to the community. Now, whenever individuals

are induced to engage in the less profitable employment, by assurances of national indemnity; whenever the rest of the community are compelled to make good the losses which, by these enterprises, may be sustained, the results are not only injurious but unjust; because, while the nation, as a whole, becomes a loser by these idle projects, the many are obliged to surrender a portion of their fair and well earned profits, to enable the few to amuse themselves unnecessarily with unprofitable speculations. But if, from the state of society, or from local circumstances, this measure should be partial in its operation; if this forced employment of capital should be confined to a particular portion of country, the injustice becomes doubly great, because it then not merely causes a transfer of property among the individuals of each particular division of territory, without affecting the general wealth of those divisions, but some entire districts are absolutely impoverished, while others are exclusively enriched. Under all of these aspects, the new Tariff, presented to Congress at its last session, merits our disapprobation. Its avowed object is, by imposing heavy duties on the importation of foreign manufactures, to grant high bounties to all of the capital which shall be employed in manufactures in the United States; and, by shackling, at the same time, and curtailing, our commerce, to force, by these united measures, to the loom and the work-shop, much of the labor and capital which are now employed in agriculture and commerce. This is unnecessary or unwise. If labor and capital employed in manufactures will produce as much profit as in agriculture or commerce, it is unnecessary, because the cupidity and intelligence of individuals, when unrestrained in their pursuits, will soon turn them into this channel; if they will not produce as much profit, it is unwise, because labor and capital will, by these means, be forced into an unprofitable employment. Every laborer employed in unproductive occupations must become, directly or indirectly, a burden on the community. He will either become a pauper, to be supported directly by the charity of his fellow citizens, or he must be supported indirectly by their consenting to pay more for the products of his labor than would purchase the same products from other quarters. It is to this point that the premature establishment of manufactures will lead; and the effort now made to impose heavy duties or prohibitions on foreign manufactures, is only to disguise, in this shape, the bounties we must pay to the laborers engaged in the domestic fabrication. We are aware that the employment of capital is not always determined by its absolute profit. Other circumstances have, and deserve to have, much influence on the pursuits of men.

It has heretofore been said, that the price of labor and provisions in this country was so high as to render the establishment of manufactures impracticable; that bounties were indispensable to give them life, and even a temporary existence. This was virtually to abandon the question, and to acknowledge that labor in other pursuits obtained a profit which could not be afforded to it in this. But a new aspect is now given to this discussion. The price of provisions, which

for many years continued unusually high, has now fallen to a level preternaturally low; labor must fall in proportion; and when these preliminary advantages are obtained, why should systems of restriction be still wanting? Why should public exertions be required to force labor into this channel? There can be but one reply, which is, that to the establishment of manufactures our state of society is still unpropitious. The surface of our vast territory is still insufficiently supplied with laborers, our forests are still uncleared, and much of our most fertile soil is still untrodden. Man, even the poor man, will not seclude himself within the walls of a manufactory while he can possibly find a maintenance in the more cheerful walks of agricultural industry. The life of the husbandman is one of comparative enjoyment. In his paths are health, and temperance, and peace, with a mind exercised and improved, and a proud spirit of independence encouraged and preserved. He looks for his subsistence not to one man, nor to a few; wherever there is earth, and air, and a soil to be cultivated, he may find employment. But the monotonous and melancholy toils of the manufacturer, confined for days and years to one spot, and one unchanging occupation, contract the mind, debilitate the constitution, and render him more dependent than the laborer in any other occupation. One country in Europe bears, in this point of view, a strong resemblance to our own. Russia possesses an almost unlimited extent of fertile territory, thinly inhabited, and still offering to the husbandman untinted occupation. In Russia, for the last forty years, perhaps for a century past, provisions and labor have been cheaper than in any other country in Europe; yet, in Russia, manufactures have made no permanent progress. Like ourselves, the inhabitants manufacture a few articles to which their circumstances are peculiarly favorable. During the existence of what was termed the continental system, efforts were made in that country to diffuse manufactures extensively, and the necessity is now imposed on the government of embarrassing its commerce, in order to afford some protection to the establishments which have been prematurely called into existence. But the Russians are not, and will not soon become, a manufacturing nation. The same causes appear to have produced with them and with us similar effects. The peasantry, even when unenthralled by their system of vassalage, can still find subsistence by tilling the soil, and the ineffaceable love of nature, only to be overpowered in the human mind by a stern necessity, leads them to prefer the coarse and scanty enjoyments of the rustic laborer, to the more dependent though more flattering occupation of the manufacturer. Surely the moral influence of such feelings and opinions ought not to be disregarded, nor can their political effects be overlooked in an enlightened government. When an overflowing population shall naturally give rise to extensive manufactures, we will then rejoice in their establishment, as a mean of varying the application of capital, and of giving employment to suffering industry; we will share with them equally our rights, our privileges, and our immunities. But we perceive no motive for producing artificially such a state of society. The experience of Europe

teaches us, that the population in great manufacturing cities is very ignorant, very immoral, very poor, and very dependent; and yet from the facility with which, from their numbers, the workmen can combine, from their misery, and from the fluctuating nature and results of the pursuits in which they are engaged, they become the most disorderly and discontented citizens in the whole community. For such a population shall we voluntarily exchange the tillers of our soil? Shall we drive, almost with violence, our citizens from the ploughshare and the scythe? And if upon this subject we require additional cautions, let us remember how much more stable has been the power and prosperity of agricultural nations, than of those founded on any other basis. Every duty on imported commodities operates as a tax on the consumer. When these taxes are imposed only to supply the necessary wants of the government, they are cheerfully paid; when imposed to enrich individuals, we should surely consider well on what grounds the claims of such individuals are advanced; we should inquire carefully what reciprocal benefit the public will receive. It is the interest of every member of the community to purchase the articles he may wish, or be obliged to consume, at the lowest possible price. This increases the value of his exchangeable commodities, and increases, of course, his enjoyments; whenever this privilege is abridged, it becomes him to inquire whether, as an individual, or as a member of the community, he receives an equivalent advantage. The great plea for taxation advanced in this case, is, that domestic manufactures will make us independent of foreign nations. This is certainly important in itself, but when advanced as a ground for forcing artificially the production of every thing we want, the plea is every way fallacious. Physical independence consists in possessing those articles absolutely necessary for our existence. These we have long since enjoyed. Few nations are, from the bounty of Providence, more independent than the United States. Beyond this, the independence of the savage consists in his exemption from all wants; the independence of the civilized man, in his power of supplying and gratifying the wants of social life. Wealth to him, in this case, is independence; and wealth consists in the quantity of consumable articles he can obtain for the surplus labor or produce he may have to exchange; and this in a great measure depends on the liberty he possesses, of exchanging those articles under the fewest restraints, and consequently to the greatest advantage. Whatever curtails this power, lessens his wealth; whatever diminishes his wealth, abridges his independence. If, under a new system, the surplus labor of an individual will procure for him but one-half of the articles of consumption which he has hitherto been accustomed to receive, for the same labor, what compensation will it be to him, to know that this diminished supply was produced in his own country, or even on his own farm? But if this argument is really valid, it will extend much further than its present advocates mean to apply it. If it is necessary that a nation, to be independent, should raise within itself every article it has occasion to consume, it will be much more important to

raise those of general consumption, than those which may merely gratify the wants of luxury and passion. If, therefore, we are, by bounties, to fill our northern cities with manufactories to furnish articles with which we could well dispense; if this is necessary to our independence, equally so will it be to cover our pine barrens with hot houses, to raise the sugar and coffee, the tea and pepper, and the other productions of tropical climates; to give high rewards for the manufacture of wine, and oil, and salt, and many other articles, which are daily required in our domestic consumption. Sufficient bounties will furnish us with a domestic supply of those articles, all of which are now in common use; and some, from our habits, articles almost of necessity; and when one portion of our countrymen call for bounties to create manufactures to which our state of society is unfavorable, let them act uniformly, and at the same time grant bounties to raise those articles to which our climate is unpropitious. The attempt will be equally practicable and equally wise. In truth, if this plea is of any avail, if this absolute local independence is of real importance, it applies as strongly to sectional as to national divisions.

If it is desirable that a nation should produce within itself all the articles necessary for its consumption, it is equally desirable that each division of that nation, each province or state, each district, each plantation, each farm, each individual, should equally possess this power. If every nation is dependent, that is, obliged to purchase the production or manufactures of other climates or countries, every individual must be in the same degree dependent, who has to purchase the products of the labor of other men. There is no distinction in the argument, there is no pause until we arrive at that state where each individual shall produce for himself every article which he may wish to consume, and must consent to want every article which he cannot raise or fabricate. This will carry us back to that condition in which the semi-barbarous people of Europe existed during the pressure of the feudal system; when almost all intercourse between individuals and nations was interdicted; when nothing was interchanged but injuries, nothing remembered but oppression and wrong. How much more simple, and more wise, is it for each nation to raise or manufacture those articles which are most congenial to its soil, and to the habits of the people, and exchange its superfluous productions for the productions of other climates, and other conditions of society; to perpetuate, if possible, amicable relations with all countries, by the firmest of all ties, reciprocal advantages; remembering, always, that, in proportion as this interchange is free and unrestricted, will be the mutual benefit it will confer? We acknowledge that most foreign governments still impose great restrictions on national intercourse; that they have made great exertions, and immense sacrifices, to produce at home manufactures of all descriptions; great efforts to secure this species of independence; and, it is really from the experience of foreign nations, that we are inclined to suspect the wisdom of their practice. We have seen them impose upon themselves a population which they are obliged to support; entangle themselves in a sys-

tem from which, even when their ablest statesmen deplore its defects, they cannot, without a revolution, be extricated. The very magnitude of the evil prevents a remedy. The amount of capital, and the number of people engaged in an unprofitable employment, may render it cruel, if not impracticable, to withdraw from it the countenance and support by which it was first encouraged; and the influence which so strong an interest, and one so easily combined, can exert over any government, should make us in this country very cautious how we render that a claim, which, at first, may be regarded as a favor.

It is, in the present instance, to the extraordinary combination of interests, and of exertions, among a class of citizens whose pursuits are very distinct, and whose title or pretensions to support are widely different; it is to this demand for indiscriminate encouragement that we particularly object; it is this combined effort to force our government from its position, that we view with apprehension and alarm; and, when we perceive the difficulty of resisting now the application of the united body of the manufacturers, even when advancing new, and, as we think, unreasonable, claims, what administration would ever have the power or the resolution to withdraw from them, hereafter, any privileges which may have once been improvidently granted. Neither should it be forgotten, how hostile to the general spirit of our constitution is every system of restriction, of monopoly, of particular privileges; it has been our boast, and our highest advantage, that we have been able to commence an experimental government, liberated from all those incumbrances and embarrassments which time and circumstance, and prejudice and ignorance, have imposed on the old governments of Europe—incumbrances which, even in an enlightened age, they cannot remove. That we have been able to bring to the test of experience the theories and speculations of the statesman and the philosopher; that we have been able to exemplify, most particularly, the advantages of unlimited freedom in the pursuits and opinions of men. Our own career has been one of unexampled prosperity. Our own experience forms one of the most instructive records of history. Most unwise shall we be, if, forsaking our own doctrines, if, untaught by our own lessons, we shall abandon the simple but sublime principles by which we have hitherto been guided, to adopt the temporary, fluctuating, disjointed expedients of European practice.

We regret when we are compelled to advert to local or sectional advantages, or to view our own interests as distinct from those of any other portion of our fellow-citizens; but the circumstances which have lately been forced upon our attention, oblige us to view this question in relation to our own immediate interests. The southern states are not, and cannot, for a long series of years, become a manufacturing nation. We have not a population equal to the cultivation of our soil, and the insalubrity of our climate forbids the hope that this deficiency will soon, if ever, be supplied by a population of white laborers. We raise, and must continue to raise, provisions, ar-

articles of the first necessity for man in every climate, and raw materials for the use and consumption of manufacturing nations. It is, therefore, peculiarly our interest, that our interchange with the world should be free; that the markets for the consumption of our produce should be extended as widely as the habitations of man. It is equally our interest, that the articles we are compelled to consume should be procured on the most advantageous terms. We are among the last people, who should wish to restrict the freedom of commerce; or, by limiting, on our part, national intercourse, induce other nations to impose countervailing restrictions upon us. Let us not flatter ourselves that the statesmen of Europe will permit a system of restrictions to be partial in its operations. It is a matter, almost of delicacy, to touch this part of the subject; but it is idle to shut our eyes to our danger. Let us then examine the possible, we may say the probable, effects of this system on the great staple of our country. Our cotton is now admitted into Great Britain, on terms as liberal as the cotton of any foreign nation—it can be carried to her ports in our own vessels—in fact, this trade is now chiefly carried on in the vessels of the United States: and, by this means, some of our most important manufactures, those connected with ship building, are encouraged, and the security and reputation of our country are increased by the seamen it nurtures and protects. To this trade Great Britain consents, because to her the general commerce of the United States is highly important; and because our consumption of her manufactures offers an equivalent for the advantages we now enjoy. But let us once declare, that this trade in future shall be beneficial only to ourselves; that we will take nothing from her, while we wish her still to continue the great consumer of our produce; and we may soon feel the error of such calculations. If, for instance, we should prohibit in this country the introduction of the manufactures of Great Britain, or impose on them duties amounting to a prohibition, have we no reason to apprehend that she may, on her part, prohibit totally the introduction into her ports of our cotton, our rice, and our tobacco, and turn to other quarters for the supply she may require? Brazil and the East Indies can even now furnish her with these articles in sufficient abundance; and, independent of the advantages she would derive from her general intercourse with these countries, the transportation of these very commodities would be exclusively in her own vessels, and her ship owners, and her seamen, would equally profit by this direction of her commerce. The new governments, too, arising in South America, possess an immense extent of territory adapted to the production of cotton and tobacco, and flour and rice. All of them must at first become agricultural nations, and, for a long time, they will have to exchange the rude productions of their soil, for the manufactures of other countries. On all sides we shall meet competitors, in the consuming markets, ready to avail themselves of our errors, and profit by our mistakes; ready to occupy any which we may abandon, or from which we may be driven. Nor can we doubt of this result. Have we ever found the statesmen of the civilized world in-

sensible to the interests of their respective nations? Have we ever found them deficient in sagacity to perceive, or in promptness to meet the hostile combinations of foreign commerce? The interchange of nations, like the intercourse of individuals, can only be maintained by mutual and reciprocal advantages; and the experience of the world appears clearly to demonstrate, that the more free is that intercourse, the more unfettered the commerce and the capital of any nation, the more will the pursuits of that nation become extensive, and diversified, and exempt from the fluctuation and ruin which finally must attend every system established on a forced employment of capital. Against these evils, the prospect is held out to us of a domestic market for the consumption of our raw materials. This prospect is certainly delusive. In the United States, we could only calculate to manufacture for the supply of our own wants, and this would not consume one-half, perhaps not one-third, of the cotton we now raise, without adverting to the other staples of the country, or without bringing into view the rapidly increasing production of our western states. Surely we cannot expect to become exporters of manufactures, when we are obliged to call for enormous duties to protect them against competition, even in our own markets; and when it is acknowledged that the removal of these duties will at any moment prostrate the whole system in remediless ruin. And, for this insufficient and insecure market, we are called upon to invite and provoke the commercial hostility of the whole civilized world, and to expose ourselves to the risk of having our productions driven from every country, when the government may think that reciprocal advantages should form the basis of every encouraged, or even tolerated, commerce. The southern states will derive no immediate advantage from this measure, even if it should prove successful; but they are urged to promote it with the hope of creating a market for their productions, which may protect them from the evils they may feel on the possible failure of all foreign markets; and, for this remote and contingent benefit, for this possible supply of a possible want, they are to endure many privations, to submit to many impositions, and to jeopardize the most important and valuable interests of our country.

Of the importance of our foreign commerce; of its influence on the revenue, or even on the protection of our country, it is idle to expatiate; but one view, connected intimately with the question before us, we wish to notice. Foreign commerce draws wealth from abroad, and those engaged in it may prosper, without, in any degree, injuring the prosperity of other portions of the community. It is, in fact, the great principle of life, which gives activity and energy to all of the operations of productive industry. It ranges over the world to discover the markets in which each particular commodity can most advantageously be exchanged; and the very transportation of these commodities becomes a source of great profit, and furnishes, at the same time, an arm of defence which no nation should, without very serious consideration, permit to decay. It is easily seen and acknowledged, that, by this system, our foreign commerce will be deranged

and materially diminished; but no one has undertaken to predict the extent of the injury. Indeed, the combinations of commerce are rarely seen or understood, even by those most deeply engaged in its operations. The exchanges that appear most simple are sometimes the result, sometimes only a term in a series of exchanges that have been made, or are yet to be completed in the most distant regions of the globe. The commerce that is carried on with one country is frequently dependant, for its success, on a commerce carried on, through different channels, and under a different aspect, with some remote and unconnected nation.

When we touch such a system rudely, we know not what portion may perish from our rashness or our ignorance. Surely, at a moment like the present, when the commerce of the whole world is embarrassed and debilitated, it would be most unwise to add to the inevitable evils of the hour. Let us rather foster that portion which remains, extend by every possible means its enterprizes, and give new vigor to its exertions. Every interest and occupation in our country has suffered within the two last years, by the rapid decrease of the circulating currency of the world, and by the fall in the price of labor and of produce, which has resulted in part from this diminished circulation, and in part from the steady continuance of peace among the civilized nations of the globe. But, of the great interests of our country, no one can doubt, that the mercantile has suffered most; and, if bounties could be afforded to any one class of our citizens, the claims of the merchant for past losses, and present embarrassments, would be the strongest. Yet, on this class, we now wish to impose new burdens, and render more precarious the still hazardous ocean of commercial enterprize. Nor can we possibly overlook, on this occasion, that class of our citizens to whom this nation is virtually indebted for so much of its wealth, and so much of its renown. Nor think, without emotion, of discarding from our employment, and driving into foreign service, the seamen, who, through so many years of discouragement, continued faithful to their country; who, in the hour of peril, have always been the foremost to rally around her banners; who, in war, have encircled her with glory; and, in peace, still patient, still laborious, have quietly returned to an arduous, an unceasing, and a dangerous occupation. With such a race, we wish not to part. Another evil, of great magnitude, presses on our attention: a duty of 30, 50, and 100 per cent, is called for, on all articles of foreign manufacture. This is virtually to admit, that the productions of the foreign artizan can be sold in our markets, at one half, or two-thirds of the price for which they can be manufactured at home. Will not the prospect, therefore, of immense profits, lead to the illicit introduction of foreign manufactures; to the creation on our frontiers, of an organized system of smuggling? This will be the more to be apprehended, when these impositions are opposed to the general interests and wishes of the community. Public opinion will no longer, as at present, guard from violation the revenue laws of the country. Now, they are consi-

dered merely as the means of providing for the necessary support of our government, as operating fairly, mildly, and equably, on all classes of our citizens, and as preventing the imposition of more direct and more vexatious burdens. Yet, even now, intelligent men, doubt whether the tariff is not, in many instances, unwisely high; and, whether the temptations held out to smuggling are not greater than a prudent government ought to offer. Under a higher tariff, the duties will be considered as partial, and for the exclusive benefit of a small portion of the nation. They will be transgressed; the revenue of the country will be injured, and the government will be compelled to increase the severity of our penal laws, and to add enormously to the expense of guarding those laws against violation. This is not all;—it is candidly admitted, that this system, if adopted, will so derange and circumscribe our commerce, that we shall no longer look to our custom-houses, for the support of our government. We must, as a constituent part of this plan, adopt a regular and permanent system of direct taxation. After having paid bounties innumerable, for the support of manufactures, we must pay taxes to make good that revenue which those very bounties have tended to diminish. We shall have to divert to our daily support the resources which will be wanted, and should be reserved for the hour of danger; and, we shall incur, unnecessarily, the risk of alienating from the government the affections of the people. We have yet to add the probability, perhaps the certainty, that, after all, this great effort will be altogether useless. If these manufactures can only exist, by excluding from our markets the productions of foreign work-shops, what power, moral or physical, that we possess, can secure the exclusion? If Bonaparte, while enforcing his continental system, by the most arbitrary and sanguinary decrees, and by the efficient power of a great military despotism, could not close the continent of Europe against British manufactures; if Great Britain, with her insular situation, and her multitude of ships, cannot prevent her coasts from becoming a great mart and theatre of smugglers, how can we hope, with our mild laws, to prevent intrusion on every point of our extended and unprotected shores? How can we guard the long line of our northern, and north-eastern frontier, even from the mid-day trespasser? Our revenue will be destroyed, our legal and honorable commerce curtailed, and the morals of our citizens vitiated, by the temptations and frauds of a contraband traffic, while the manufacturers, themselves, may be overwhelmed by the re-action of their own system. For, there can be little doubt that our country would be inundated by foreign manufactures, liberated even from the impositions, and those not light ones, which they are now compelled to pay. And, surely, when we examine the present claims advanced by the manufacturers, we should be tempted to suppose, that the much which has been already granted, had on all sides passed into oblivion. The tariff which now exists, and which was imposed, in most cases, for the particular benefit, and under the direction, of the manufacturers, is, probably, as high as the circumstances of the country

will bear. We have already, perhaps, transgressed, in their favor, the limits which principle would concede. Our manufacturers are not only placed by the side of the agriculturist; they are, as far as governmental bounties can operate, advanced and preferred. When has the agricultural interest called for bounties to enable it to continue a culture which has been found unprofitable? Yet this may become necessary; in Great Britain it has already occurred. The corn laws of that country now act as a bounty on agriculture. They are a necessary supplement to the manufacturing system. The government has been compelled to adopt them, to place the farmer on a footing with the manufacturer, to whom so many bounties had previously been granted. One evil has naturally produced another. Every interest in that country now rests on an unnatural foundation, and requires artificial support; in consequence, every thing is precarious, every thing unstable. The elements of convulsion are on all sides prepared, and nothing but the power of a military government prevents the explosion.

The only stable employments of capital, those only which can be free from incessant fluctuation, are those which arise spontaneously from the situation of a country, or the state of its society. The manufactures that can only flourish during war, or under impolitic restrictions; those that wither at the approach of peace, or of an unshackled commerce, merit not our encouragement. Those that require no bounty will dread no competition; and, the capital and the labour which are employed in them, may be considered as permanently vested. If we begin once to give bounties, and the duties now proposed are but bounties in an indirect shape, let us make the system uniform and equal. Let us give bounties on the exportation of cotton and tobacco, on the exportation of rice and flour; let us give bounties on the labour that brings these commodities to our markets, and on the vessels that transport them abroad; let us, in short, give bounties to every production of domestic industry. If, from the magnitude of this effort, we recoil as from a thing impossible, we must then demand why this system should be partially adopted? Why one-twentieth part of our citizens should be enriched by bounties drawn from the labour of all of the remaining classes of society?

To manufactures we have no hostility; we wish to see them arise, flourish, and attain a vigorous and permanent maturity; but, we wish them to advance gradually as our wants, our means, and the state of our society, shall be adapted to their establishment. We think it unwise, by precipitate measures, to force manufactures into a premature being, and then impose upon ourselves the necessity of supporting them through a precarious, a diseased, and after all a temporary existence. To the establishment, at any cost, of manufactures, which, like the munitions of war, are necessary for our national security, we have never objected. But to an organized system, for the general creation of manufactures, upon speculative principles, we pointedly object. It is at the threshold we must yet pause. The steps we now take, we may not be able to retrace. The pledges we now

give to our citizens we may not be able to recal. When thousands, perhaps millions of dollars, shall have been invested in manufactures, with the assurance of public support and protection, we know not how, with justice, this system could be abandoned, and the property, vested under such assurance, be devoted to irretrievable destruction. Even if the evils attendant upon these efforts should prove in every respect pernicious, and should press sorely on every other branch of national industry, we must go on. It is impossible to point out the limits at which this system will rest. The tariff which was adopted with the approbation of the manufacturers in 1816 is now found insufficient. The tariff proposed in 1820, if it should be adopted, after having induced the investiture of additional millions of money, may be found equally unavailing. And, when more capital, and a much greater proportion of our population, shall be engaged in manufactures, the influence of the wealthy, and the claims and the necessities of the needy, whom we ourselves have seduced into these occupations, may force the government, even reluctantly, and with a consciousness of its errors, into more disastrous measures; to the imposition of still higher duties, to restrictions, to prohibitions, to the necessity of lining our coasts with armed vessels, and our shores with revenue officers; to the necessity of injuring the best interests of our country, and debasing the character and moral principles of a large portion of our citizens.

To manufactures, we repeat, we have no hostility. We wish them to share in the general prosperity of our country, and repose and flourish under its liberal protection. But we perceive in them no features which would entitle them to partial favors, or peculiar privileges. Against a system, therefore, designed to elevate one interest in society to an undue influence and importance, against a system intended to benefit one description of citizens at the expense of every other class, against a system calculated to aggrandize and enrich some states, to the injury of others, against a system under every aspect partial, unequal, and unjust, we most solemnly protest.

STEPHEN ELLIOTT,

Chairman of the Citizens of Charleston.

JAMES JERVEY, *Secretary.*

[The text in this block is extremely faint and illegible, appearing as a series of horizontal lines across the page.]

